

CEW+ LEADERS

Potential made possible.

CELEBRATING 48 YEARS OF AWARDING SCHOLARSHIPS

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** in memoriam*

CEW+ Scholarship Program

Commemorating 48 Years of Supporting Women and Nontraditional Students' Educational Dreams

CEW+ empowers women and underserved individuals in the University of Michigan and surrounding communities by serving as an advocate and providing resources to help them reach their academic, financial, and professional potential.

The History

CEW+ was founded in 1964 (then called the Center for the Continuing Education of Women) to address barriers that kept women from successfully pursuing degrees and careers. CEW+ quickly discovered that traditional financial aid was dependent on full-time enrollment – an impossibility for many women at that time, regardless of their ambition, intelligence, and ability to succeed.

CEW+ founder, Jean Campbell, and her staff responded to the financial need many women faced by designing an innovative scholarship program focused on women, raising an initial \$7,500 in private donations. The first scholarships were awarded in the fall of 1970 to mark the 100th anniversary of women being admitted to the University of Michigan.

In 1990 the Margaret D. and Harry A. Towsley Foundation's \$1 million endowment to the program greatly expanded the number of scholars CEW+ can support each year. CEW+'s scholarship program continues to grow as many other generous individuals and organizations provide funds for more than 50 scholarships.

CEW+ joins with all of our generous donors in celebrating over 1,800 scholars and fellows who have received support since the program began. By connecting private resources with scholars' intelligence, motivation, and effort, CEW+ helps to transform individual lives which in turn helps families, workplaces, and communities.

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The Scholars

CEW+ Scholars come from a variety of graduate and undergraduate programs on the Ann Arbor, Dearborn, and Flint campuses. They are students who have experienced an interruption in their education or are providing significant care for a minor, older adult, or disabled adult, showing remarkable resilience as they juggle the demands of an elite institution with existing family and work responsibilities. Some are returning to college after time away to raise a child or care for a family member, many have worked multiple jobs to save for college, and others have traveled to the U.S. in pursuit of educational opportunities.

Despite strong academic records, impressive accomplishments, and defined goals, many scholars experience significant financial barriers to their success. Much like the original scholarship recipients of the 1970s, these bright, determined students have overcome daunting obstacles to pursue their educational dreams. CEW+ Scholarships provide the necessary boost for them to successfully complete their degrees and make an impact in their fields of study.

Today, we celebrate a rich partnership between the University community, our generous supporters, and CEW+ staff. We join the scholars, their families and friends, and their academic advisors in expressing our deepest admiration and best wishes for their success at the University of Michigan.

Congratulations 2018-19 Scholars!

The CEW+ Scholar Success Fund

CEW+ Scholars often tell us, it's more than just the scholarship that makes the difference in their academic careers. The customized support CEW+ provides to scholarship applicants and awardees is just as important as the funding. With this wisdom in mind, we created the Scholar Success Fund so CEW+ Scholars can engage in a variety of programs and services that will help them expand their network, access resources, and be successful at the University of Michigan and beyond.

The Scholar Success Fund supports...

- Assistance with scholarship applications and financial aid
- Programming and events tailored for nontraditional students
- Dedicated staff members who create programs and outreach to meet the emerging needs of the CEW+ Scholar Community

Since creating this fund, CEW+ supporters have recognized its importance and generously answered the call. Their foresight continues to ensure that all CEW+ Scholars can thrive – both during and beyond their award year. On behalf of all our scholarship recipients, we want to thank every donor who has prioritized the academic careers of CEW+'s impressive scholars. Your support helps validate scholars' goals and abilities, and enhances a sense of belonging at the University of Michigan.

Through the Scholar Success Fund, we ensure that every scholar is able to reach their full potential and embrace a sense of purpose and belonging as a student and beyond. Together, we create a vibrant community more powerful than any individual.

If you have questions about funding a scholarship or supporting the Scholar Success Fund, please contact Charlotte Myers at charlomy@umich.edu or 734-764-7258.

Thank you

The Scholarships

GAIL ALLEN SCHOLARSHIP Recipient: Tamiko Smith

In memory of their daughter Gail, Mr. and Mrs. Harold Allen established the Gail Allen Scholarship in 1997 with support from their family and friends. Gail Allen was the 1995 CEW+ Dorothy Gies McGuigan Scholar whose goal was to become a teacher who would “engage high school students to think critically about our society and help young women find their voice.” Gail Allen’s excitement for studying history and women’s studies at the University of Michigan was interrupted by illness, but she persisted and earned her master’s degree and teaching certification. She was pursuing further studies in history at the time of her death. The Gail Allen Scholarship is awarded annually to recognize women who are returning to complete an undergraduate or graduate degree at the University of Michigan. To honor Gail’s interests, women enrolled in history, women’s studies, or related fields are given preference for this scholarship.

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN SCHOLARSHIP Recipient: Nadine Jones

Created in 1990 by the Ann Arbor Branch of the American Association of University Women, the AAUW Scholarship supports women returning to school to complete their degrees at the undergraduate or graduate level. AAUW is a membership organization that promotes equity for all women and girls, lifelong education, and positive social change. The AAUW Scholarship is dedicated to creating better access to education for women.

AAUW: MARY ELIZABETH BITTMAN MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP Recipients: Tamara Edwards, Miguel Ochoa

In 2006, the American Association of University Women joined with the Bittman family to establish the Mary Elizabeth Bittman Scholarship. A member of AAUW for over 50 years, Elizabeth was an Honorary Life Member–Ann Arbor Branch. She was also a 70-year resident of Ann Arbor, active in both business and community activities. Despite economic difficulties, Elizabeth graduated from the University of Michigan in 1941 with a degree in political science—at a time when a college education for women was less common than it is today. In honor of Elizabeth’s belief that, “an education is something that can never be taken away,” this scholarship is designed to help women and underserved students whose studies have been interrupted to complete degrees in their chosen fields.

CHRISTINE KAHAN BLACK SCHOLARSHIP Recipient: Rachel Peery

The Christine Kahan Black Scholarship is the first CEW+ Scholarship ever established as a Christmas present! Chris Black has had a lifelong commitment to higher education, advancement for women, and equity of opportunity. As a highly respected administrator and innovator in Research Development Support at the University of Michigan Medical School, Chris is a teacher/mentor for researchers as they develop and fund their projects. She specializes in helping young faculty—many of whom are women—develop projects and win their first grant from the National Institutes of Health. Early in her career, Chris developed award-winning videos to inspire young women to pursue careers in science and technology. She’s done similar work for students with disabilities, and, with her husband, supports scholarships for students with physical challenges through the Ann Arbor Community Foundation, as a memorial to their son, Burt. Now, to honor Chris, and her career spent helping people meet their potential to do great things, Chris’s husband, Herb Black, established the Christine Kahan Black Scholarship. He presented it to her on December 25, 2013.

JANE AND BILL BLOOM SCHOLARSHIP Recipient: Jesse Mathieu

In 1964, when Jane Bloom walked through the doors of the newly opened CEW+ (then called the Center for the Continuing Education of Women), she was only the second person to seek assistance. Her affiliation with CEW+ began then – when Jane was a forty-year-old mother of ten and Ann Arbor-area chicken farmer—and it continues to this day. With perseverance and determination, and help from CEW+ along the way, Jane Bloom completed both an undergraduate and a medical degree at the University of Michigan and had a distinguished career as a physician. Throughout it all, Jane’s husband Bill, who died in 2011, was a supportive partner. Together they established a scholarship endowment with the intention of fully funding tuition for a CEW+ Scholar; their scholarship was awarded for the first time in 2008. With their scholarship for an undergraduate on the Ann Arbor campus, Jane and Bill sent a message to all future recipients to “aim high, raise your sights, and stick with it for a rewarding life.”

RUTH JEANETTE BUTTREY SCHOLARSHIP Recipient: Vicky Bankowski

The Ruth Jeanette Buttrey Scholarship was created in 2004 by her granddaughter, Stephanie Buttrey. It honors Ruth Buttrey, who filled her life with learning and adventure. An early proponent of women's education, Ruth studied at a teacher's college as well as at the New England Conservatory and the Chicago Musical College. She then worked with a company in Chicago which sent representatives throughout the country with scripts and costume trunks to produce shows for local organizations using local talent. While traveling, she met Ted Buttrey in Havre, Montana, who volunteered to be in one of her shows. A few years later, during the depression, Ruth wrote her own show and sent her own producers through the northwest, earning welcome income for the family during those difficult days. In the late 1930s they moved to Texas where Ted oversaw the growth of Buttrey Stores, Inc. Throughout her life, Ruth supported various women's groups, especially as an active participant in the PEO Sisterhood. Ruth and Ted also endowed many scholarships in his home state of Montana. CEW+'s Ruth Jeanette Buttrey Scholarship recognizes an outstanding undergraduate on the Ann Arbor campus, with a special focus on the fields of business and engineering.

JEAN W. CAMPBELL SCHOLARSHIP Recipient: Kamaria Porter

Established in memory of Jean Campbell, this scholarship honors her lifetime of work dedicated to the service of others. Encouraged by her parents' commitment to community involvement and achievement, Jean flourished in her efforts to ensure that those around her had the opportunity and resources to live up to their potential, a trait she lovingly passed to her three children. Serving as a founding member and, then, the first director of CEW+, Jean contributed immeasurably to CEW+'s growth and reach, raising the funds necessary to create the center's scholarship program in 1970. Known nationally for promoting research on women's education and her pledge to improve the lives of women and underserved populations, Jean was awarded an honorary Doctor of Laws Degree alongside former President Obama in 2010. She was devoted to her family, her husband and three children Bruce, Joan, and Carol. This scholarship, established by Tim Williams in memory of his late wife and Jean's daughter, Joan, and in honor of Jean's lifetime of accomplishments, will continue Jean's legacy of supporting women and underserved students at the University of Michigan.

CEW+ GRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP Recipient: Justin Villanueva

The CEW+ Graduate Scholarship was established in 2008, the result of a Presidential Donor Challenge launched by University of Michigan President Mary Sue Coleman. The Challenge made it possible for donors to increase the impact of their gift by matching a portion of their funds with a University contribution. The CEW+ Graduate Scholarship Fund supports promising graduate students, ensuring that the University will continue to attract the “best of the best.” With gratitude, CEW+ acknowledges Loretta M. Skewes for establishing the CEW+ Graduate Scholarship Fund, thereby enabling others to contribute and ensuring that we will continue to grant CEW+ Graduate Scholarships in perpetuity.

COLLEGIATE SOROSIS FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP Recipient: Angela Bonham

The Sorosis Corporation, composed of alumnae of Collegiate Sorosis, established a foundation to support sorority members in need of financial assistance in order to remain at the University of Michigan. With the closing of Collegiate Sorosis, the alumnae voted to make foundation funds available for women’s scholarships through CEW+, thereby continuing their encouragement of women scholars.

LUCILE B. CONGER ALUMNAE GROUP SCHOLARSHIP Recipient: Jacquie Gallant

Established in 1990, the Lucile B. Conger Alumnae Group Scholarship provides funding for undergraduate women. The Lucile B. Conger Alumnae Group was one of thirty-two University of Michigan alumnae organizations nationwide. From 1947 to 2016, the Conger organization was involved in raising funds to provide scholarships for women to attend the University of Michigan.

MOLLY H. DOBSON SCHOLARSHIP

Recipients: Holly Honig, Carla Jackson, Dana Knapp, Adrianna McGeehan, Kristy Sanfilippo

Created in 1992, the Molly H. Dobson Scholarship supports women returning to school to complete undergraduate degrees. These scholarships recognize women who have shown creativity, persistence, and dedication while striving to complete their education. The scholarships were created through the generosity of Molly Dobson, a dedicated emerita member of the CEW+ Leadership Council and an active volunteer in the University and larger Ann Arbor community. Molly created these scholarships because she believes in the value of education. They are designed to be flexible because she knows that deserving women have different educational needs and goals.

ROBERT BRUCE DUNLAP MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP Recipient: Colleen Reed Freund

This scholarship was established in 2006 in memory of Robert Bruce Dunlap. Robert was a long-time University employee, first at the University Hospital and later at the School of Dentistry, and an even longer-term sometime patient at the University Hospital. As a professor's son, he was well imbued with the importance of education and the necessity of helping students further their education. Because of Robert's long association with the University Hospital and his gratitude to all members of the medical teams, it is appropriate that first preference be given to an Ann Arbor campus undergraduate student pursuing a career in a health-related field. The donor has stipulated that this scholarship may be extended beyond one year until graduation.

ELIZABETH M. DUSSEAU SCHOLARSHIP *and* **MARGARET DUSSEAU BREVOORT SCHOLARSHIP**

Recipients: Mario Oliveira Sanca and Joel Arnold

The Elizabeth M. Dusseau and Margaret Dusseau Brevoort Scholarships, established in 2013, were endowed in the estate of Elizabeth Dusseau, who died in May 2012 at the age of 101. Elizabeth Dusseau earned her bachelor of arts and master's degrees in public health from the University of Michigan, and became an expert in parasitology. After many years of dedicated service to the University, Ms. Dusseau was promoted to assistant professor, a rank she held until she retired in 1978. Margaret Dusseau Brevoort began her long career as a social worker in Ann Arbor. However, she spent most of her professional life in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, as the executive director of Milwaukee Psychiatric Services Agency and a renowned and early proponent of social work education. Elizabeth Dusseau chose to endow these scholarships in her name and that of her sister to honor their upbringing. Born in Monroe, Michigan, to a family that highly valued education for both male and female children—at a time when such a belief was somewhat radical—their family's commitment to women's rights was deeply ingrained. It is no surprise that Elizabeth and Margaret made their marks upon the world. When possible, Elizabeth's CEW+ Scholarship will be awarded to "a woman in the field of science," and Margaret's will go to a "woman in the field of social work."

MARGARET E. GNEGY SCHOLARSHIP FUND Recipient: Frances Trott

Dr. Carol Stratford received a CEW+ Scholarship in 1980 while pursuing her PhD in pharmacology at U-M, and is the first CEW+ Scholar to pay it forward through an endowed CEW+ Scholarship. After earning her PhD she went on to complete her law degree as a mother in her forties. Carol established this fund to provide support to women and nontraditional graduate students pursuing degrees in the sciences. Naming this Scholarship Fund for Professor Margaret (Peggy) Gnegy, Carol intends to honor her longtime friend who provided thoughtful guidance and encouragement during and after Carol's time as a U-M student. Peggy was the first female instructional-track faculty member of the Department of Pharmacology at the U-M Medical School and served as a committed teacher and mentor to many. Focusing her efforts on providing strong and caring guidance to women students and faculty, she mentored 15 female doctoral students, 6 female postdoctoral students, and continues to mentor to this day. Peggy

has served as Chair of the Graduate Program of the Department of Pharmacology for 20 years and won the Rackham Distinguished Graduate Mentoring Award in 2009. Carol's hope is that recipients of this fund will be inspired by Peggy's role as a trailblazer for women in the sciences.

BETH HALLORAN SCHOLARSHIP Recipient: Maggie Hanna

One of the University of Michigan's most admired fundraising leaders from 2001-2011, Beth Halloran is now a senior executive at St. Catherine University. From 2005-2008, she served as Development Director at CEW+. Her energy, focus, intelligence, and integrity not only generated fundraising success, but also nourished lasting relationships with CEW+ donors. Two of those donors, Molly Dobson and Connie Dunlap, connected with Beth in a special way and deepened their friendship even after she left Ann Arbor. In 2013, Connie and Molly collaborated to endow a new CEW+ Scholarship in Beth's honor. The Beth Halloran Scholarship is to be awarded annually to students whose academic careers have been interrupted, and/or who are the primary parent responsible for minor dependents.

JOAN P. IRELAND SCHOLARSHIP Recipient: Ahqam Algalham

Like many of today's CEW+ Scholars, Joan Ireland was a nontraditional student. After raising her children in the Midwest, she moved to California and returned to school to pursue graphic design. When she met her husband, Everett, they discovered that they had both been students at the University of Michigan at the same time, but had never met one another. Out of gratitude to the University of Michigan, and their lifelong enthusiasm for learning, Joan and Everett Ireland both established Michigan scholarships as part of their estates. Joan Ireland passed away in 2014, and her bequest established the Joan P. Ireland Scholarship in perpetuity at CEW+. The Joan P. Ireland Scholarship will provide support to deserving women students, undergraduate or graduate in any field, who need financial assistance in order to pursue a degree.

BEATRICE KAHN SCHOLARSHIP Recipient: Stephanie Sablich

Beatrice Kahn began graduate work in the early 1950s, about 10 years before CEW+ was created. She was then the busy mother of three young daughters and eager to prepare for a career in her newly chosen field of social work. Her entry into the MSW program was hastened by her husband's unexpected cancer surgery; she was concerned that she might become the sole or primary support of her children. She completed her degree in social work and went on to 29 years as a gifted therapist and marriage counselor at Child and Family Service. Her own experience and her long friendship with Jean Campbell and other CEW+ leaders made Beatrice Kahn a dedicated and enthusiastic supporter of the Center. Beatrice died in November 2012 at the age of 94. Her husband, her family, and her many friends established the Beatrice Kahn Scholarship at CEW+ in her memory.

ELSIE CHOY LEE SCHOLARSHIP Recipients: Kelly Hirina, Laura Magnusson, Rowan Renee

The Elsie Choy Lee Scholarship assists women and underserved students pursuing their own work in art, writing, or music. It is also given to students researching creative women who have struggled to find their own voices within these fields. The cultivation of creativity was a vital part of Elsie's search for life's purpose and meaning. In "Art in My Life," a talk Elsie gave in 1991, she said: "Literature, art, and poetry have been my friends all my life; they are my media of expression in good times and bad. Looking back, I can say that these arts not only enriched my life, they have helped me regain part of my health." Elsie advocated making known the unheard voices of women in the arts in world cultures throughout time. Her eight-year research on an 18th-century Chinese woman poet resulted in *Leaves of Prayer: The Life and Poetry of a Farmwife in Eighteenth-Century China* (The Chinese University Press of Hong Kong, 2nd ed., 2000). The Elsie Choy Lee Scholarship was established in 2001 by her husband, the late Joseph T. A. Lee, with the support of family and friends.

SARAH WINANS NEWMAN SCHOLARSHIP Recipient: Emily Armstrong

The Sarah Winans Newman Scholarship, created in 2001, provides financial support to undergraduate, graduate, and professional women pursuing degrees in biological and biomedical sciences and related fields, demonstrating financial need, and showing promise of

academic merit. Dr. Newman most recently served as Associate Dean of the Horace H. Rackham School of Graduate Studies and, from 1970 through 1996, was a professor in the Department of Anatomy and Cell Biology at the University of Michigan Medical School. A long-time volunteer and friend to the Center, Sarah recognizes the contributions CEW+ makes to the University community and is pleased to continue her commitment to the education of women.

ALINE UNDERHILL ORTEN FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP Recipient: Aminah Muhammad

Established in 2001, the Aline Underhill Orten Foundation Scholarship extends support to women pursuing careers in chemistry, biology, natural resources, epidemiology, and related fields. Aline's intelligence and versatility always led her to new ways of learning and teaching. An early student of engineering, she started her career in chemistry by attending classes with medical students and began a lifelong pattern of excelling by crossing disciplinary lines. Like Dr. William Beaumont on Mackinaw Island in the previous century, Dr. Orten had an opportunity to study working intestines through the open wound of a cooperative patient who participated in her study for many years. She later worked to construct an analyzer of body fluids, the first in the Midwest. Always innovative in her own work, Aline understood that rapidly changing environments in the sciences demand high levels of education, resourcefulness, and flexibility. The scholarship is dedicated to that purpose.

MARY MALCOMSON RAPHAEL FELLOWSHIP

Recipients: Francheska Alers-Rojas, Ariana Bancu, Amanda Respass, Carly Wayne

The Mary Malcomson Raphael Fellowship was established in 1985 for women graduate students in a humanities or social science field in the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts. The fellowships are awards of distinction presented to women held in the highest esteem by their faculty. Fellowship recipients have been nominated by their departments and are selected on the basis of their academic excellence and their potential to make contributions of exceptional usefulness to society. The fellowships are provided through an endowment established by the late Margaret Earhart Smith in recognition of her friend Mary Malcomson Raphael, a singularly resourceful and creative woman who "had a gift for evoking power in people above and beyond their ordinary capacity."

LINDA J. RIDER SCHOLARSHIP Recipient: Elissa Gonzalez

This scholarship in celebration of Linda J. Rider was established by her family in 2004. When Linda enrolled at the University of Michigan at the age of 41 to earn her bachelor's degree, she was a professional writer, editor, photographer, and single mother. To honor her accomplishment of earning an undergraduate degree as a nontraditional student, the Linda J. Rider Scholarship is awarded to women who need financial assistance to return to college later in their lives.

RETIREMENT INCOME SOLUTIONS SCHOLARSHIP Recipient: Thông Phan

This scholarship is made possible by a gift from local financial advisory firm, Retirement Income Solutions, Inc. (RIS). RIS Managing Partner Todd Kephart said the decision for RIS to support a CEW+ Scholarship was clear, "We all believe strongly that education holds the key to a better life and have seen that play out in our own families and communities. And many of our clients work in higher education, so this scholarship was a natural extension of the work we do." RIS Scholarships have also been created at two other outstanding local organizations, Girls Group and the Ann Arbor Rotary Club.

HELEN HUFF SHELL SCHOLARSHIP Recipient: Kelsey Soderstrom

The Helen Huff Shell Scholarship was established in 1982 by Helen when she retired from her distinguished career in personnel management. Throughout her career, Helen diligently sought to enhance the status of women in the workplace. Her scholarship recognizes that commitment to women in business or the professions.

MARGARET DOW TOWSLEY SCHOLARSHIP Recipients: Lauren Benjamin, Tonya Brown, Allison Carron, Dawn Davis, Bethany Diedrich, Claudine Margolis, Heather Rae McAlvey, Promise McEntire, Asia Mohamed, Bashair Pasha, Lindsay Passmore, Amina Peters, Renee Pinter, Cynthia Rice, Anne Steen, Andrea Eskridge, Afifa Uzzaman, Mai Ze Vang, Alisha Williams, Sasha Zhou

The life and work of Margaret Dow Towsley has opened countless doors for women and children and immeasurably improved the life of the Ann Arbor community. After completing a bachelor's degree at the University of Michigan and a master's degree at Columbia University Teachers College, Margaret Towsley taught preschool at the

University School in Ann Arbor, married pediatrician Dr. Harry Towsley, and started a family. A neighborhood summer playgroup in her home became the Children's Play School, which thrived for more than 53 years. Margaret was one of the first persons in Ann Arbor to acknowledge the special needs of children and working mothers, and her leadership helped inspire and shape the Perry Nursery School. An early believer in equal access for women, Margaret was a major force in creating a gender-integrated Ann Arbor YMCA. When women and their organizations needed a home of their own, she helped establish the Women's City Club. An active political leader, she became the first woman elected to the Ann Arbor City Council. Those who knew Margaret Towsley describe her as a woman devoted to her family and as a mother who fostered in her five daughters an independence of spirit and a confidence to reach for their own stars. Her quiet and sustained support nourished the CEW+ Scholarship Program since its founding. Returning women students have benefited in untold ways from her faith in the Center and her belief in educational opportunities for women. Indeed, Margaret Towsley always acted upon the premise that, given support and nurturing, all people can achieve their dreams.

IRMA M. WYMAN SCHOLARSHIP Recipients: Brindha Arinathan, Cara Canady, Geoffrey Jenkins, Gerardo Longoria

The Irma M. Wyman Scholarship provides support for women and underserved students in engineering, computer science, and related fields on either the undergraduate or graduate level. Criteria for selection also include merit, promise of future contributions, and life circumstances. Irma was a 1949 graduate of the College of Engineering at the University of Michigan, one of two women in her class. She became involved with the computer industry in its early stages and rose to become the first female vice president at Honeywell, Inc., then a Fortune 100 company. After retirement from the corporate world, she served 10 years as Archdeacon of the Diocese of Minnesota. Having benefited during her education from both the financial and psychological support of a Regents Scholarship, she established the Irma M. Wyman Scholarship in 1996 to provide a similar boost to others. Irma passed away in 2015 at the age of 87. CEW+ is proud to continue her legacy.

The 2018-19 Scholars

Francheska Alers-Rojas Mary Malcomson Raphael Fellowship



As the first individual in her family to graduate from college, Francheska Alers-Rojas earned a law degree from the University of Puerto Rico and passed the Puerto Rican bar exam in 2009. Despite this monumental accomplishment, she lacked a mentor and the resources to explore career paths outside of law. In 2012, Francheska migrated to the United States and everything changed. While her socioeconomic class defined many of her life experiences while living in Puerto Rico, in the United States, Francheska sought opportunities that allowed her to connect with her ethnic and cultural communities to open doors and gain new experiences. It was through this exploration that she learned of the field of developmental psychology, and her future goals began to take shape.

Francheska Alers-Rojas is currently earning her PhD in psychology as well as a graduate certificate in Latina/o studies. Upon completing her PhD, Francheska's goal is to "bring attention to underrepresented groups, not only to highlight the challenges they face, but also to understand the strengths and important contributions they make."

Francheska's research focuses on the ways cultural factors benefit ethnic and racial minority adolescents. Known as someone who is "likely to create innovative, high-quality research over her graduate career, and to contribute substantially to research with a significant impact on Latina/o youth development and well-being."

CEW+ is thrilled to name Francheska a Mary Malcomson Raphael Fellow as she completes her inspiring work focused on Latina/o adolescents.

Ahqam Algalham Joan P. Ireland Scholarship



Ahqam Algalham is earning a bachelor's degree in early childhood education from the University of Michigan-Dearborn and working diligently to provide a great life for her two daughters.

When Ahqam began working as a paraprofessional within the Dearborn Public School system, she realized her desire to work with and support children with disabilities, especially those on the autism spectrum. Impressed by their skills and knowledge, she believes that their abilities and talents are too often undervalued and overlooked. Inspired by her work, after earning her bachelor's degree Ahqam will earn an endorsement in autism spectrum disorder to become certified to work with this population of students.

Inspired by the joys of her childhood, she seeks to instill a sense of excitement around learning with future students. As the first person to earn a college degree in her family, Ahqam hopes to not only set an example for her daughters but to make a difference for her students and positively influence her community. Of her commitment to earning her degree, Ahqam says, "I know in the end my hard work will pay off."

CEW+ is proud of Ahqam's commitment to supporting children with disabilities and names her a Joan P. Ireland Scholar.

Brindha Arinathan Irma M. Wyman Scholar



Growing up, Brindha Arinathan believed she was living the ideal life. As a child, she got along well with her teachers, had a group of friends who shared her passions, and enjoyed the time spent earning her undergraduate degree. As she prepared to get married, Brindha expected this next step in life to be just as sweet. When her once happy marriage became abusive, she felt isolated from the life she once knew. After experiencing many difficult challenges and setbacks, Brindha's marriage ended and she began rebuilding her life.

As she planned for her future, Brindha concluded that the stable foundation she sought required furthering her education. She then enrolled at the University of Michigan to pursue a master's degree in computer engineering. Recognizing a need within the computer industry to solve low-power problems, Brindha hopes to bridge the gap by pairing new technologies with artificial intelligence. In addition to her vision to change the world of computer technology, she also intends to develop a domestic violence awareness campaign for schools and colleges in India. With the mission of helping girls and women recognize signs of and offer support to those experiencing domestic violence, Brindha strives to serve as a beacon of hope for those struggling to find resources.

With her "ability to set high goals, laser-like focus, and dedication," she has a full and rewarding future ahead of her, and CEW+ is honored to name Brindha an Irma M. Wyman Scholar.

Emily Armstrong Sarah Winans Newman Scholar



Emily Armstrong grew up valuing higher education but believing it was simply out of reach. As a young mother with few resources, she was nervous to pursue an undergraduate degree, but quickly realized that she could not only succeed in higher education but also excel. After graduating with her bachelor's degree in biology with highest honors in 2017, Emily felt inspired to continue to pursue her dreams. She believes that the path she has taken to get where she is today, though tough, has taught her balance and to appreciate the simple things in life.

Recognized for her "outstanding academic performance, as evidenced by her near-perfect GPA," Emily is now pursuing a master's degree in environmental health sciences and hopes to positively impact the lives of manual laborers and tradesmen. Surrounded her entire life by these workers, Emily knows just how at risk they are of developing health problems due to regular exposure to hazards, and the fact that many laws protecting workers have not been updated since the 1960s.

Drawing from personal experience, Emily knows firsthand how important it is to stay healthy when your contributions are vital to the stability and success of your family. Of the challenges Emily has encountered on her path, she says they have left her "more determined and better prepared to deal with the many unexpected barriers that arise in life."

CEW+ values Emily Armstrong's resiliency and names her a Sarah Winans Newman Scholar.

Joel Arnold Margaret Dusseau Brevoort Scholar



Joel Arnold experienced many challenges on his path to success. Placed in foster care at the age of 12, he lived with various caregivers before becoming homeless when he was 16. With the drive to push himself and build a successful future, Joel set his sights on earning his GED, achieving that goal in 2001.

When considering a career path, Joel drew from his personal experiences and chose to pursue social work. Earning his bachelor's degree in 2015, he sought employment helping individuals who have experienced trauma and poverty achieve peaceful, successful lives. With limited resources and as a first-generation college student, Joel has shown great persistence in his educational pursuits. As a father, he is setting an example as someone determined to succeed regardless of the barriers that lie in his path.

Joel is currently earning his master's degree in social work and his vision is to become licensed and offer evidence-based intervention techniques to benefit disadvantaged populations. By serving as an advocate for policy change that would improve access to and utilization of mental health services, Joel will serve as a valuable resource to individuals in times of need. It is said that "Joel has experienced a lifetime of potential barriers" that could have easily derailed any student yet, he has remained steadfast in the pursuit of his goals.

CEW+ celebrates Joel's persistence and names him a Margaret Dusseau Brevoort Scholar.

Ariana Bancu Mary Malcomson Raphael Fellowship



Ariana Bancu is pursuing a PhD in linguistics and believes that language is an essential part of identity and heritage. Growing up, Ariana spoke both Romanian and German, later learning English and Spanish. Valuing the identity, culture, and history tied to language, she acknowledges that there is a real risk of losing cultural understanding if endangered and understudied languages are lost and forgotten.

Ariana is currently studying Transylvanian Saxon (TrSax), an understudied and endangered language only transmitted and maintained orally for the last 800 years. Because there is little to no written record on TrSax, Ariana was unable to learn this language in a classroom but benefited greatly from speaking German and Romanian in her research on TrSax.

In 2017, Ariana became a mother and experienced challenges associated with balancing parental responsibilities, teaching, and research. She remains committed to preserving the TrSax language and intends to do so by making data she has collected available through digital archives that will benefit learners and speakers of the language. She has also created a TrSax database, which over time she hopes to turn into a platform for crowdsourcing as a means of documenting and maintaining the language. Recognizing that languages can be lost in many ways, sometimes through lack of documentation, and other times through forced assimilation, Ariana hopes to contribute to the preservation of TrSax and, in turn, the community's identity, culture, and history.

CEW+ is fascinated by Ariana's body of work and names her a Mary Malcomson Raphael Fellowship recipient.

Vicky Bankowski Ruth Jeanette Buttrey Scholar



Vicky Bankowski experienced many challenges on her path to higher education. As a single mother, she earned her GED and did so well on the exam that she was encouraged to take the few courses she needed to earn a high school diploma. After successfully completing these classes, Vicky became a proud Pontiac High School graduate.

When her oldest son shared the news that he was getting married, and soon after would become a father, she was inspired to make changes in her life. With the goal of being the best grandmother she could be, Vicky focused on self-care and enrolled at a local community college. Though serving as a caregiver to her youngest son sometimes makes the pursuit of her degree challenging, she is determined to achieve her goals and lift up those around her in the process.

Vicky is currently pursuing her bachelor's degree in general studies and focuses on serving as a mentor to other students, and providing an excellent example to her grandchildren. Vicky's time as a U-M student has been intentional and fruitful. Over the years, she became an associate member of the University's chapter of Sigma Xi, spent two years researching environmental health sciences through the Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program (UROP), and studied abroad in Rome. She is actively involved on campus and believes that she will achieve her goals regardless of how far off they seemed at the beginning of her higher education journey.

Inspired by Vicky's persistence, CEW+ names her a Ruth Jeanette Buttrey Scholar.

Lauren Benjamin Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar



Lauren Benjamin, “a scholar of race, gender, and species,” teaches her students that “conscious citizenship starts with empathy.” In the classroom she doesn’t shy away from heated discussions, instead seeks methods to turn those conversations into learning moments, exploring compassionate methods for understanding the nuance of opposing thought. Lauren encourages compassion in every situation and urges students to seek to understand why someone with an opposing view feels the way they do. She relishes the moments when her students begin to value differing opinions, rather than diminish them. Outside of the classroom, Lauren also serves as a crisis line counselor for at-risk youth and draws from her experiences as a teacher to “communicate with people who are at their most vulnerable.”

Lauren does not believe that all of life’s trials make you stronger. Instead, she accepts that some challenges simply do that: challenge you. Over the course of a recent year, many barriers stood in the way of Laura’s success, yet she focused on facing obstacles and taking them in stride. Determined to achieve her goals, she worked diligently on her dissertation, was nominated for an Outstanding Graduate Student Instructor Award, and completed a fellowship for the Institute for Research on Women and Gender. All the while, she remained committed to supporting her son and partner.

Currently pursuing her PhD in comparative literature and English language, with a certificate in Judaic studies, Lauren’s ultimate vision is to teach in a university setting, focus on research, and further her activism.

CEW+ gladly names Lauren a Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar in recognition of her commitment to helping others.

Angela Bonham Collegiate Sorosis Foundation Scholar



Angela Bonham spent 18 years as a wife, and four and a half of them as a military wife, where continual relocation kept her from gaining experience in any one career field. When she and her husband were finally able to put down roots, they had two sons and she decided to stay home with them. Though she had always longed to pursue higher education, Angela felt like it was never the right time so she focused on supporting her sons as a school volunteer. In her time at their school, her desire to seek a college degree grew.

After ending her marriage, Angela found herself longing for change. She began attending community college, finding the experience valuable and fulfilling. Wanting to serve as a positive example for her sons, Angela is now pursuing her bachelor's degree in social work from the University of Michigan-Flint. Though social work initially seemed like a good fit, it has now become her passion.

Upon completing her bachelor's degree, Angela intends to immediately pursue a master's in social work. Her ultimate goal is to specialize in supporting LGBTQIA+ youth and advocate for child welfare policy change. With a special interest in bridging cultures and strengthening communities, Angela spent the summer 2018 semester in South Africa, studying the philosophy of Ubuntu. Known for her keen ability to combine "professionalism with creativity," and "kindness with boldness," Angela is certain to make an impact in her future career.

CEW+ is proud to name Angela a Collegiate Sorosis Foundation Scholar.

Tonya Brown Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar



Tonya Brown has experienced many barriers on the path to her success but remained steadfast in the pursuit of her dreams. At the age of 17, she lost both of her legs when she was struck by a drunk driver as a pedestrian, quickly learning that many spaces we experience in our everyday lives are not accommodating for people with disabilities. In fact, she left college after realizing that there was no way she could navigate the campus alone. Unaware of her rights at the time, Tonya found work with AmeriCorps at the Disability Network as a Peer Support Counselor, Advocate, and Housing Specialist. During that time, she learned that not only could she advocate for herself, but also for others experiencing similar challenges. Tonya is now pursuing her bachelor's degree in criminal justice at the University of Michigan-Flint and serving as the Director of Foreign Outreach as a member of student government.

Upon graduation, she will continue to serve the community, prioritizing individuals with disabilities, environmental protections, and victim compensation. Tonya believes that "it is important for our criminal justice system to recognize people with disabilities," and will advocate for all police municipalities to provide sign language and disability awareness training to their officers. Known as someone committed to working for the benefit of humanity, Tonya wants to be certain that a disability does not hinder anyone from achieving their goals.

CEW+ commends Tonya's persistence in the face of challenge and names her a Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

Cara Canady Irma M. Wyman Scholar



Cara Canady has learned over the years that, though she is determined and possesses a strong work ethic, she owes many of her accomplishments to the wonderful support system of individuals invested in her success. In 2003, she began pursuing a bachelor's degree in engineering. Financially supporting herself through school, Cara was confident she had the skills and determination to graduate with a solid career in engineering. As she entered her third year of college, and the collapse of the auto industry took its toll on southeast Michigan, doubt crept into her mind. At this time, Cara began working with Ozone House, a nonprofit that supports homeless, at-risk, runaway youth, an experience that ignited her passion for community health informatics.

After reevaluating her goals, Cara began working at the University of Michigan as a Financial Systems Analyst Report Writer. With a passion for STEM, Cara realized her dream of pursuing a graduate degree in information systems, with a certificate in health informatics.

Upon graduation, Cara intends to support nonprofit, community, and educational organizations by increasing data accessibility and lessening data related burdens. Despite her heavy workload, Cara is known for the following abilities - staying focused, learning new concepts quickly, and enthusiastically supporting her peers and other students. Pairing determination with a strong support system, Cara is destined to succeed.

CEW+ values the work Cara is doing to benefit nonprofit and community organizations and names her an Irma M. Wyman Scholar.

Allison Carron Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar



Just four years ago, Allison Carron would not have believed you had you told her she would soon be serving as the president of her dental hygiene class. As a 2011 University of Michigan graduate, with a bachelor's of fine arts, she had set out on a much different path. Upon graduation, Allison had relocated to Austin, Texas where she began a career as an administrative assistant for a student support program at the University of Texas at Austin. It was during this time she realized her desire to work in a field that would make a positive impact on others.

After moving to California where she worked as an assistant at another university, Allison's dissatisfaction with her job and lack of a support system began to affect her negatively. After a year, she decided to move home and began working at the University of Michigan. Experiencing anxiety and depression, Allison sought counseling services where she learned that it is never too late to affect change in her life.

Soon after, she began pursuing a degree in dental hygiene with the goal of becoming a hygienist and educator. Known as someone who "exhibits a willingness to learn far above the average," Allison seeks to earn her master's degree from the U-M School of Dentistry. Allison believes that oral health is connected to a person's quality of life and wants to "change someone's life through a smile."

CEW+ support Allison's goals and names her a Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

Dawn Davis Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar



Dawn Davis is passionate about working with underserved populations, especially children. As a child, she lived in foster care before being adopted. As a survivor of abuse and neglect, she knows firsthand how important Michigan's child welfare system can be in the lives of children and families.

Six weeks after she gave birth to her first child, Dawn adopted a 10-month-old boy. When he turned 7, she had her last child and stayed home until all three of them were in school. At that time, Dawn began taking courses at a local community college and earned her associate's degree in liberal arts. She went on to pursue her bachelor's degree in social work, graduating Summa Cum Laude in 2017.

Dawn's childhood paired with her experiences as a mother have encouraged her to pursue a master's degree in social work from the University of Michigan. Ultimately, Dawn intends to use her degree to support, motivate, encourage, and empower youth in times of need. She hopes that by being a source of encouragement, they will achieve their dreams and live happy and productive lives. Drawing from her personal experience with the child welfare system, Dawn possesses the skills and calmness to truly make a difference. Though challenges have arisen in her path, she has remained steadfast in the pursuit of her goals.

CEW+ commends Dawn's persistence and names her a Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

Bethany Diedrich Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar



When Bethany Diedrich was 12, her mother was diagnosed with cancer and she quickly became a caretaker to her mother and siblings. Faced with the day-to-day challenges associated with running a household, she missed out on the experience of a carefree childhood. With maturity beyond her years, Bethany promised herself at that young age that she would do everything she could to advocate for socially and economically disadvantaged individuals. While earning her bachelor's degree, Bethany worked 30-40 hours a week to support herself and upon graduation, began working at Newport Hospital in Rhode Island. While there, she designed therapeutic programming to engage patients in healthy recreational activities while they received medical care.

As she pursues her master's degree in social work, Bethany remains focused on working with children and families that have experienced trauma and hopes to connect them with resources that will help them to repair relationships. In her research, Bethany has found that in those exhibiting aggressive behavior, the most common themes are trauma and lack of support. She believes that through services promoting healthy attachment in relationships, "children can heal from trauma, and in turn, decrease their aggressive behavior." By providing training opportunities for teachers, social workers, counselors, and administrators in school settings, Bethany hopes to inform educators on how to identify traumatized children and in turn, connect them with appropriate resources. Known as a "rare gem of an individual," she will undoubtedly impact the lives of countless children in need.

CEW+ is pleased to name Bethany a Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

Tamara Edwards AAUW: Mary Elizabeth Bittman Memorial Scholar



Tamara Edwards believes, “your past does not define your future.” Though challenging life circumstances led to her leaving college before earning her degree, returning to higher education in 2015 reinvigorated her. Today, she is confident that it was the best choice she has ever made.

As a single parent, Tamara experiences challenges associated with splitting her time between attending classes and supporting her daughter. Determined to be a great parent, and an even better role model, she is pursuing her bachelor’s degree in English with a teaching certificate. Tamara is known for her “commitment to academic self-improvement, and her willingness to risk intellectual and personal vulnerability to learn from her mistakes,” and doesn’t plan to stop at her bachelor’s. Upon graduation, she seeks to pursue a graduate degree in counseling.

Ultimately, Tamara would like to serve as a counselor to middle and high school-aged children, as she believes this is a vulnerable time where they are likely to get lost in the shuffle and lose focus. Drawing from her firsthand experience as a struggling high school student, she wishes someone had noticed her in her time of need and provided vital support and resources. Tamara envisions a fruitful career advocating on behalf of students with mental health challenges and contributing to youth suicide prevention. She would also like to volunteer to teach English abroad, positively impacting children on a global scale.

CEW+ values Tamara’s dedication to providing vital support to youth in need, and names her an AAUW: Mary Elizabeth Bittman Memorial Scholar.

Colleen Reed Freund Robert Bruce Dunlap Memorial Scholar



Colleen Reed Freund is earning her bachelor's degree in dental hygiene and, upon completion, seeks to attend the University of Michigan Dental School. As a first-generation college student with complete financial responsibility for her education, Colleen dreamed of pursuing a career in dentistry, but due to financial constraints, had never considered it a viable option.

After earning her associate's degree in 2012, she set out to work as a dental hygienist, and though the desire to return to dental school remained, felt immense pressure to pay down her student loan debt. After five years working as a hygienist, and with patients repeatedly asking if she planned to become a dentist, Colleen decided it was time to take the plunge and pursue her dream.

Colleen is known for her dedication and commitment to the field of dental hygiene and is said to be "focused on not only self-fulfilling her goals but sharing her talents with patients and other students." In an effort to ensure success, Colleen attends regular tutoring and study sessions to equip herself with the tools and resources to succeed. As someone who enjoys helping others, she hopes to improve oral hygiene for adolescents, and underserved populations by volunteering at community-based clinics, or at the dental office she plans to open in the future. Ultimately, Colleen hopes to have a positive impact on the individuals in her community.

CEW+ is inspired by Colleen's commitment to pursuing her dream and names her a Robert Bruce Dunlap Memorial Scholar.

Jacquie Gallant Lucille B. Conger Alumnae Group Scholar



Jacquie Gallant grew up in a small community and became a wife and mother shortly after graduating high school. Focused on raising her family, she gained an enormous skillset as a stay at home parent where time management and collaboration were key in organizing her days. As an individual in recovery, with the painful memory of losing twins to preterm labor, Jacquie recognizes how fortunate she was during times of challenge to have the support of a recovery center and insurance to help cover the associated costs of regaining her health.

With a drive to fundraise and volunteer, Jacquie draws from her family's struggles and appreciation for a community that works together as she completes her associate's degree in arts. Of the challenges she has faced, Jacquie says, "knowing firsthand how isolating and destructive substance abuse and mental illness can be, I firmly believe that we all need to work together to help each other." It is with this firm belief that she will attend the University of Michigan-Flint, seeking her bachelor's degree in social work with the goal of helping others in her community and educating to remove stigma surrounding addiction and mental health.

As Co-Membership Chair for the National Society of Leadership and Success, Jacquie received the National Engaged Leader Award in April, and her advisor shared that her "potential impact upon reaching her educational and professional goals is enormous."

CEW+ applauds Jacquie's determination in the face of adversity and names her a Lucille B. Conger Alumnae Group Scholar.

Elissa Gonzalez Linda J. Rider Scholar



Elissa Gonzalez is pursuing a bachelor's degree in communications with a certificate in public relations. As a first-generation college student, and a second generation single mother, she knows firsthand the challenges faced by parents as they raise children, support their families, and pursue college degrees.

When relationship challenges significantly disrupted Elissa's life, she felt it was time for a change of course, and enrolled at the University of Michigan-Dearborn. Focused on healing and providing a happy and healthy environment for her children, Elissa is committed to "finding the right educational and career path that translates [her] skills and interest into something worthwhile." Active on campus, Elissa seeks out opportunities to join student organizations, takes internships in her chosen field, and attends leadership conferences to gain skills outside of the classroom. Elissa finds joy in helping people and intends to use her degree to build a career in public relations, with the goal of becoming a champion for nonprofits and community outreach initiatives.

Long-term, Elissa will pursue employment as a grant writer for a nonprofit organization, working to help them achieve long-term sustainability. She would eventually like to start her own nonprofit that will combine outreach, healthy living, and urban farming. Known for her "maturity, composure, intellectual capabilities, thoughtfulness, and determination to succeed," Elissa pushes beyond her insecurities and is dedicated to achieving her goals.

In recognition of her great potential, CEW+ names Elissa a Linda J. Rider Scholar.

Maggie O'Connell Hanna Beth Halloran Scholar



Maggie O'Connell Hanna had been a bilingual teacher for 6 years before she became a parent to her twin daughters in September of 2015. With their families and support network in Michigan, she and her husband made the tough choice to leave teaching jobs they loved in Austin, Texas to move home. Inspired by the love she felt for her daughters, Maggie took the GRA when they were just two months old and began her doctoral program.

With two young children and 24-hour caregiving responsibilities, Maggie notes that she is both challenged and humbled by her day-to-day experiences. In the 6 years prior to having children, Maggie understood the importance of education, yet it wasn't until she became a mother that she truly solidified her goal to pursue equitable education for all children and families.

Maggie is earning her PhD in educational studies, specializing in literacy, language, and culture. As a first-generation college student, she seeks to use her PhD to "highlight empowering, family-centric approaches to education that could have far-reaching implications as communities continue to search for innovative ways to achieve academic success for all." Maggie focuses on collaborating with families, educators, and community agencies as she works to improve educational opportunities for youth, especially those in low-income, culturally diverse communities.

Lauded for her ability to seamlessly multitask in all areas of her life, Maggie is known for leaving a lasting impact on those who know her personally and professionally.

CEW+ is excited to support Maggie in her endeavors and names her a Beth Halloran Scholar.

Kelly Hirina Elsie Choy Lee Scholar



Kelly Hirina spent 17 years touring the world as a dancer before choosing to return to U-M to earn her master's of fine arts in dance. Recognizing that a dance career is often inaccessible to those with lower socioeconomic status, she looks to use her degree to help dancers navigate successful careers and pursue their dreams.

As a young girl, Kelly's family struggled to support her dance aspirations in a traditional sense because of the costs associated with private lessons and professional guidance. Determined to pursue her goals, she focused on carving her own path. As an undergraduate at the University of Michigan earning a bachelor's degree in dance, she was then awarded a Fulbright Scholarship. Kelly's career as a dancer grew when she moved to the Netherlands and focused on "defeating cultural differences in life and dance training, crossing language barriers and comprehensively understanding immigration policies." During this time, her passion grew for supporting and guiding dedicated dancers as they embark on their own career paths.

When she retired from her dance career, Kelly knew she wanted to pursue a master's degree in order to pair dance theory and pedagogy, and affect change in the global dance community. Recognizing that while many dancers are women, many leadership roles are filled with men. With this in mind, Kelly is dedicated to earning her MFA and sparking change.

CEW+ applauds Kelly's commitment to improving the environment for future dancers and names her an Elsie Choy Lee Scholar.

Holly Honig Molly H. Dobson Scholar



In 1990, Holly Honig decided to turn over a new leaf. Though the few years prior proved some of the most challenging of her life, she now had the confidence to let go of her troubling past and pursue her dreams. In a happy and healthy relationship, Holly started a family and had three children. Driven by financial responsibility for her family, she enjoyed her work but flourished in her role as a volunteer. In 2016, when she began volunteering at the nonprofit Humanity for Prisoners she first realized her desire to help individuals in the prison system and those reentering communities.

In 2016, Holly chose to leave the corporate world behind and pursue education as a means of finding a new and meaningful path. After earning her associate's degree from a community college in 2017, Holly is now earning her bachelor's degree at the University of Michigan College of Literature, Science, and the Arts. Upon graduation, Holly intends to impact policy and systems, working on behalf of incarcerated individuals. In the long term, Holly hopes to pursue a graduate degree with the goal of further alleviating suffering for those in and transitioning out of the prison system. Recognizing mass incarceration as a "real and solvable issue," Holly aims to serve as an advocate for restoration, love, and justice.

CEW+ is proud of Holly's commitment to helping individuals as they set out to make better lives for themselves, and names her a Molly H. Dobson Scholar.

Carla Jackson Molly H. Dobson Scholar



Carla Jackson experienced many conflicting emotions as she began her higher education journey at the University of Michigan-Dearborn in 1996. Excited for her future, she was still recovering from injuries caused by a car accident and grieving the loss of two family members. Filled with joy when she discovered she was expecting her first child, Carla made the difficult decision to put her education on hold and focus on her family.

Over the next 17 years, Carla had five daughters and worked full-time to support her family. In 2014, she decided to return to the University of Michigan-Dearborn to pursue a bachelor's of business administration in supply chain management. Though there are many challenges associated with raising 5 daughters while working and pursuing a degree, Carla is committed to setting a great example for her children and is determined to succeed.

Upon graduation, Carla envisions a career in either the construction or automotive industries and will earn certificates in both Sigma Six and project management. As a nontraditional student, she enjoys serving as a peer mentor to other nontraditional students and says, "helping others to stay focused and reach their goals brings me joy." Seen as a role model for many, Carla is committed to achieving her dreams while lifting up those around her.

With great admiration for Carla's unwavering commitment to earning her degree and setting a positive example for her children, CEW+ names her a Molly H. Dobson Scholar.

Geoffrey Jenkins Irma M. Wyman Scholar



Geoffrey Jenkins is a first-generation college student currently embarking on two life-changing journeys. As he pursues an undergraduate degree in engineering, he will become a first-time father in October 2018. With the desire to support his wife and provide a safe and healthy environment for their child, he also hopes to continue his educational journey uninterrupted. Though he expects challenges, Geoffrey anticipates this being one of the most rewarding times of their lives.

Recognized for his “focus with regard to his education and professional development,” Geoffrey has shown great persistence throughout his life. Though a gap separated his high school and college careers, he is more determined than ever to achieve his goals.

Upon earning dual associates degrees in mathematics and engineering/physics, Geoffrey immediately set his sights on earning his bachelor of science in space science and engineering from the University of Michigan. The sky certainly is not the limit for Geoffrey, as he then hopes to earn his graduate degree in engineering before joining the astronaut corps where he can play an active role in contributing to the advancement of human space exploration.

With inspiring educational and professional goals, Geoffrey remains focused on providing the best life possible for his wife and their growing family. CEW+ values Geoffrey's commitment to academic, personal, and professional achievement, and is proud to name him an Irma M. Wyman Scholar.

Nadine Jones American Associate of University Women (AAUW) Scholar



A challenging childhood led to Nadine Jones achieving her independence at the age of 17. Working to support herself at such a young age, she put her educational goals on the back burner while pursuing professional success. After working as a flight attendant for Delta for 11 years, Nadine volunteered for AmeriCorps as a favor to a friend and that day forever changed the trajectory of her life. Serving as a veteran resource coordinator, many of her interactions were with college students, helping her to realize her desire to earn a degree. In 2014, Nadine enrolled in community college, and soon after transferred to the University of Michigan-Dearborn to pursue her bachelor's degree in sociology.

In her role as a veteran resource coordinator, Nadine learned of the devastating statistics regarding the number of veterans who take their lives each day and formed her own nonprofit, the Love a Michigan Vet Project. In 2015, recognized for her "extraordinary ability to bring people together in service to others," Nadine was selected as a Champion of Change, furthering her desire to serve others on a larger scale. She says, "as an adult student, I believe I have a responsibility to make life better for the younger generation of students."

Upon completion of her bachelor's degree, Nadine will pursue a master's of public administration in an effort to expand the services of her nonprofit.

CEW+ values Nadine's commitment to serving veterans and names her an American Associate of University Women (AAUW) Scholar.

Dana Knapp Molly H. Dobson Scholar



Dana Knapp has remained steadfast in the pursuit of her educational goals regardless of the challenges she has encountered. When she married at a young age, she did not complete high school. Years later, as her son began his sophomore year; Dana realized her goal of earning her diploma before he did. Attending an adult education program, Dana earned her high school diploma, graduating from Millington High School in 1991. Upon graduation, she was offered a scholarship to Baker College in Flint where she completed one year of courses before she learned she was expecting twins. Dana's family continued to grow through adoption, and today, she is the proud parent of seven children.

In 2013, she began her journey to complete the social work technician program at Mott Community College and graduated with high honors. Currently a senior at UM-Flint, Dana intends to complete her bachelor's degree in social work before advancing to earn her master's degree.

As a first-generation college student, and the mother of seven, Dana knows the importance of support and resources, and hopes to use her degree to "own and operate a facility that would provide families with resources needed to maintain healthy and safe homes." Recognized for her "innate ability to make a positive impact on foster children, their families, and the organizations she will work on behalf of," Dana has a bright future ahead of her.

CEW+ celebrates Dana as she strives to support those in her community in need and names her a Molly H. Dobson Scholar.

Gerardo Longoria Irma M. Wyman Scholar



Gerardo Longoria's family emigrated from Mexico to the United States when he was young and he always knew that he wanted to take advantage of every opportunity they had provided him by making that brave choice.

With the remainder of his family members and ancestors living in poverty in Mexico, Gerardo intends to serve as an example to future generations, making it a tradition to pursue higher education. As the first in his family to earn a degree, he recognizes the value of his hard work and determination.

He says, "When I sit down and think about reasons to stay focused and motivated I usually think about my family." Gerardo believes that if he wants to make an impact on his community, his efforts must start at home.

Currently pursuing a bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering, Gerardo intends to stop working when the time is right so he can fully immerse himself in his undergraduate courses and focus on his success. His vision post-graduation is to create ties between colleagues in the United States and individuals in Mexico in an effort to create jobs. Recognizing his family's love for working with heavy machinery, raw materials, and manufacturing, Gerardo sees great opportunity for skilled labor relationships. Seen as someone who "is working to make sure [he] and his family [has] a better life," Gerardo remains committed to serving as a good role model.

Inspired by Gerardo's courage when faced with challenges, CEW+ is happy to name him an Irma M. Wyman Scholar.

Laura Kristin Magnusson Elsie Choy Lee Scholar



Laura Kristin Magnusson's vision for a successful career is centered on "creating and disseminating strong artwork in addition to mentoring emerging voices." As a survivor of sexual assault, Laura believes that we are at a pivotal moment in time, one with the potential for tremendous social change if individuals continue with the momentum put behind the support of those harmed by sexual violence.

Positioned among top bachelor's graduates in Canada, Laura had begun a promising career with the plan to take two years off before pursuing a master's degree in fine arts. In the midst of developing a diverse and unique body of work, Laura raised nearly \$100,000 to fund a multi-year project in northern Canada, making music with beluga whales and promoting awareness of vulnerable wildlife. As a young vibrant artist, Laura could not have imagined her path in life taking such a drastic turn when she became a survivor of sexual violence.

After three years of rehabilitation, Laura was accepted to the University of Michigan as a top-ranking MFA applicant, receiving the 2017 First Year MFA Award along with other recognition. Thriving in her program, and recognizing the lack of focus on providing support for victims of sexual violence, Laura says, "I cannot change the past, but I can affect the future." Her ultimate goal is to contribute to the world of art while advocating for women and girls. Laura is recognized for her impressive body of work, but also for the fact that she "managed to accomplish all of this while overcoming significant barriers."

CEW+ supports Laura's vitally important work and names her an Elsie Choy Lee Scholar.

Claudine Margolis Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar



In her childhood home, Claudine Margolis's parents built a supportive and nurturing environment that encouraged her inquisitive mind. Contrastly, in the classroom, she experienced the many inadequacies that accompany an underfunded public school education. Drawing from these experiences, and her love of math, Claudine intends to improve K-12 public school math education for future generations of students.

Pursuing a PhD in mathematics education, Claudine will seek employment at a four-year university, working specifically with students hoping to become math teachers. She believes, "the current teacher preparation programs are not serving our students well," and "teachers are entering the field without the mathematical experience necessary to facilitate high-level discourse, and without the tools required to do their best work." Upon successful completion of her program, she envisions her work positively affecting students all over the country and world. Known for her dedication to seeking new ways to help students learn, and for her critical thinking skills, Claudine is poised to make change.

Prior to starting her studies in Ann Arbor, Claudine was working with an educational collaborative that supports students in the Department of Mental Health hospital programs. Though challenging, she found the work rewarding. Claudine also focused on building a strong network of math teachers within her school that encouraged each other and pursued continual improvement.

In recognition of Claudine and her commitment to improving math education for K-12 students, CEW+ names her a Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

Jesse Mathieu Jane and Bill Bloom Scholar



Jesse Mathieu was one of only three individuals to complete the rigorous eight-month Explosive Ordnance Disposal Operator training from an original class of twenty in the U.S. Air Force. Upon completion of the program, Jesse served under former President Obama and “successfully disarmed 248 improvised explosive devices (roadside bombs) and witnessed first-hand the destructive power of violence and fear.” His passion lies in serving and protecting individuals worldwide regardless of their background or beliefs.

A father of six, Jesse also knows the sacrifices that come along with ensuring that your children feel supported and are given every opportunity possible. Jesse is currently pursuing his bachelor’s degree in political science with a minor in Middle Eastern and North African studies and he intends to turn that achievement into action quickly after he graduates. Jesse says, “with a military career that has brought me face-to-face with actions and policies threatening world security, health, and sustainability, it has become apparent there exists a systemic problem within our political structure in addressing major global concerns.”

With his degree, Jesse intends to dedicate his future to identifying and addressing major concerns that threaten humanity. Of his commitment to ensuring the safety of humankind, it was said, “it is not surprising that someone who has already dedicated his personal life to his children and his professional life to his fellow soldiers wants to devote the next chapter of his life to creating a safer world for everyone.”

CEW+ is thankful for and inspired by Jesse’s commitment to protecting and serving and names him a Jane and Bill Bloom Scholar.

Heather Rae McAlvey Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar



Heather Rae McAlvey earned her bachelor's degree in Spanish with a specialization in women, gender, and social justice in 2009. With the goal of changing the world for the better, she set out to do just that. Working as an AmeriCorps VISTA member, she poured herself into her work. Speaking both English and Spanish, Heather Rae advocated for her neighbors in both languages and ensured that they had access to the critically important resources they needed to survive. She ensured that her fellow community members connected with local food banks, health care professionals, domestic violence shelters, and witnessed the joys and despairs of the job.

The challenges associated with helping others through difficult periods in their lives weighed heavy on Heather Rae, and she realized she needed to make a change.

Still focused on saving the world, she continued to seek positions that would allow her to improve the lives of others. Long hours and minimal pay often made Heather Rae feel as though she was a full-time volunteer. In 2013, she left her office job and began working at a nonprofit farm focused on providing rehabilitation services to individuals with traumatic brain injuries. In her time spent in the outdoors, Heather Rae realized that she wanted to pair a childhood dream and her love of service with a rewarding career and is now earning her doctor of dental surgery degree at the University of Michigan School of Dentistry. Heather Rae says, "My vision in pursuing a DDS. is to spread health and well-being to those that need it most at home and throughout the world."

CEW+ is proud to name Heather Rae a Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

Promise McEntire Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar



As a non-traditional student, Promise McEntire faced unique challenges in adapting to the academic environment. Having felt pressured to seek work immediately after graduating from high school, she considers her graduation from college to be a significant achievement. Joining an honors program at the University of Southern California gave Promise the confidence she needed to advance her studies, and she never looked back.

After graduating with a bachelor's degree in psychology with a minor in cinema-television critical studies in 2006, she joined the Peace Corps in Cameroon. During her time in Africa, Promise drew from the research skills she had developed to implement a program for Cameroonian youth. The program focused on using "behavior change communication" to promote positive health outcomes - especially with regard to HIV/AIDS - with significant implications for gender equity.

Promise's Peace Corps experience transformed her perspective, and she became committed to understanding culture, communication, and international development through a gendered lens. After returning to the United States, Promise earned her master's degree in human behavior and applied psychology, graduating in 2010.

Currently earning her PhD in linguistic anthropology with a certificate in African studies, Promise is committed to expanding her research. She is actively engaged in building a framework for analyzing language and social change in Sub-Saharan African countries. Of her work, she says, "I seek to understand how deeply familiar, deeply personal topics - such as gender and reproductive health - are creatively approached using not only new ideas but new communications technologies as well."

In recognition of her achievements and great potential, CEW+ names Promise a Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

Adrianna McGeehan Molly H. Dobson Scholar



Growing up, Adrianna McGeehan experienced hardship within her home. Exposed to violence and addiction, she poured herself into her education, learning early on in life the importance of social reform. At the age of 13, Adrianna's father, an illegal immigrant, was deported and experienced poverty and homelessness. Stemming from the fears associated with not knowing where her father was or how she could help him, Adrianna realized her passion to help people like him.

Though she completed her associate's degree in 2013, Adrianna took a break from education to focus on providing the best life possible for her family. After the birth of her first son, she began contemplating her return to higher education. She decided that all of the reasons that had originally postponed her journey were no longer enough to delay her. In 2016, Adrianna began pursuing her bachelor's degree in English with a specialization in writing from the University of Michigan-Flint. A former teacher of Adrianna's said, "[she] has always had a passion for life and saw opportunity where others would see risk."

Adrianna has a commitment to the community, and enjoys watching her children "pour love and hope into hurting people with ease and without bias." Upon graduation, she intends to use her degree to alleviate generational poverty, build awareness around addiction, develop assistance for homeless individuals, and advocate for justice for immigrants and refugees.

CEW+ is inspired by Adrianna's passion for serving others and is pleased to name her a Molly H. Dobson Scholar.

Asia Mohamed Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar



Asia Mohamed is earning her PhD in curriculum and practice and English as a second language from the University of Michigan-Dearborn. She has been working in school settings since 2001, and after graduating with her master's degree in English as a second language (ESL), worked as a school principal. It was during this time that she gained the desire to help students with the challenges they face regarding cultural conflicts and social needs.

Ultimately, Asia would like to complete her doctorate and use the skills she acquires to provide resources to future educators, conduct research within classrooms and schools, and improve experiences for those who speak English as a second language. Specifically, Asia would like to learn more about how to support female students developing their academic skills while learning English.

By improving her proficiency in ESL, Asia intends to "provide instructional programs and resources that enhance teaching and foster a safe environment conducive to learning." Though challenges have made Asia's path difficult at times, she remains dedicated to completing her PhD and making an impact on society.

As a single mother, Asia values this opportunity to pursue her education and is dedicated to providing a good life for her son. As the sole caregiver and financial provider for her child, moving forward in her career will allow her to provide him with the tools and resources he requires to be successful in life.

CEW+ values Asia's persistence and names her a Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

Aminah Muhammad Aline Underhill Orten Foundation Scholar



Many barriers stood in Aminah Muhammad's path to success, yet they certainly did not hold her back. As a child with dyslexia, her school-age years were challenging but she remained committed to her education and passed the GED exam on her first attempt. Aminah is now pursuing her bachelor's degree in behavioral science with a minor in public health.

As a single mother, Aminah enrolled in community college to increase her access to job opportunities that would help lighten her financial burdens. In 2015, she transferred to the University of Michigan-Dearborn and upon graduation, will seek a graduate degree in social work so she can assist children with learning disabilities. Aminah's goal is to become a social worker focused on helping underserved children with dyslexia reach their academic pursuits. Through this work, she hopes to provide the tools and resources to these children that she never had access to in her youth. She believes, "with guidance, these children can see their potential, break barriers and achieve all of their dreams."

Aminah's hard work and determination have paid off immeasurably in her academic career. She is currently serving as the founder and senior student advisor of the Behavioral Science Student Association, President, and co-founder of the Theta Phi Chapter of Zeta Phi Beta Sorority Inc, vice president of the Child Life Student Association, and Treasurer of the Association of Non-Traditional Students. She has also received numerous accolades, including the 2018 UM-Dearborn Difference Maker award, and was inducted to the Golden Key International Honor Society, all while maintaining her family and home life.

CEW+ greatly admires Aminah's drive and determination and names her an Aline Underhill Orten Foundation Scholar.

Miguel Ochoa AAUW: Mary Elizabeth Bittman Memorial Scholar



When Miguel Ochoa moved to the United States 13 years ago he held to the simple goal of providing for his family. Without a work permit and unable to speak English, he was forced to take jobs that were unsafe and didn't deliver a stable living wage. Once provided the opportunity to obtain a work permit, Miguel found safe and stable employment but realized that he could do so much more. That's when his wife encouraged him to enroll in classes to learn the English language.

In 2016, with the support of professors invested in his success, Miguel earned his associates degree and realized that a bachelor's degree was now within reach. Majoring in Spanish, Miguel has learned to appreciate Spanish being his native tongue and knows that being bilingual is a great resource. Although his transition to life in the United States was challenging, he is happy to be where he is today and is working toward helping other immigrant families feel welcome in the U.S.

While setting an example for his children, Miguel will pair his passion for photography with his understanding of the struggles that immigrant families face, demonstrating their courage and resiliency. After completion of his bachelor's degree, Miguel "would like to engage in direct community action within the Latina/o community." With the goal of continuing on to earn his master's degree in social work, he hopes to also inspire those around him, setting the example that it is never too late to pursue your goals.

CEW+ proudly supports Miguel by naming him an AAUW: Mary Elizabeth Bittman Memorial Scholar.

Bashair Pasha Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar



Many obstacles have lined the path of Bashair Pasha's educational pursuits. When she moved to Egypt with her father to provide care for her ailing grandmother, Bashair took online classes as a means to earn her high school diploma. Though reliable internet access was scarce, she persisted and graduated second in her class. Soon after, Bashair moved back to the United States and started earning an associate's degree at a community college.

When political unrest drastically changed the climate in Egypt, the rest of her family returned to the United States. Working diligently to pay for her college education with scholarships, grants, personal employment, and with the support of her family, Bashair values the opportunity to attend the University of Michigan and is dedicated to staying the course. Known for being "adept at reading situations and responding in a proactive yet respectful way," Bashair is viewed as a respected leader amongst her peers.

With the vision of contributing meaningfully to society, she is pursuing a bachelor's degree in communication studies and intends to become a higher education instructor. Ultimately, Bashair would like to achieve inclusive and diverse representation within media as she recognizes how significant a role it plays in our everyday lives. As Bashair approaches her graduation, she plans to complete an honors thesis for her senior year and prepare for graduate school.

CEW+ is proud of Bashair's commitment to education and communication and names her a Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

Lindsay Passmore Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar



Lindsay Passmore was drawn to social work from a young age. But when her mother became a juvenile justice social worker, she witnessed the challenges associated with her job and had a change of heart. Believing that she was, perhaps, too sensitive for the work, she set her sights on other goals.

Many years later, having found great fulfillment as a hospice volunteer, Lindsay longed to pursue social work but decided to wait until her youngest child had graduated from high school. With a desire to become a geriatric social worker, she is now pursuing her master's degree in social work. Recognized for her "integrity and commitment to compassion and caring," Lindsay is inspired by her own personal experience to provide comfort to individuals and families as they age and experience death. When her father, a single man died, she felt that his end of life experience lacked the dignity and comfort an aging individual deserved.

Volunteering over the years in hospice facilities, and with singing groups that offered comfort to families and the dying, Lindsay began to incorporate mindfulness training into her services. Also taking an interest in methods for working with trauma survivors, veterans, and LGBTQ+ individuals, Lindsay hopes to make a lasting impact on individuals as they experience death and loss.

CEW+ is inspired by Lindsay's devotion to geriatric social work and names her a Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

Rachel Peery Christine Kahan Black Scholar



A kindergarten student once told Rachel Peery that he hated writing. Determined to help that student see value in developing his writing skills, she paired her work ethic with her love of education, and by the end of the school year, the student had changed his mind. In moments just like this, Rachel is reminded that regardless of the obstacle, she has dreams that she is committed to achieving, including supporting others in their learning and educational pursuits.

Serving as a primary caregiver to her mother prior to her passing in 2012, Rachel also faced the challenge of living with complications caused by two types of Lupus, and struggled to remain healthy. With the goal of earning her master's degree in literacy from the University of Michigan-Flint, Rachel is pacing herself and staying focused on becoming a reading specialist. With a special concern for children living in poverty-stricken environments, Rachel hopes to help children educationally, but also emotionally and socially as they contemplate their own futures and aspirations. Known for her "attention to detail and ability to perform well in stressful situations," Rachel has a number of people rooting for her success. Despite health concerns and other setbacks, she remains steadfast in her belief that "giving [her] students a strong foundation in reading and writing will help them in their long-term educational goals and achievements."

Rachel believes that dedication to a game plan, paired with heart and perseverance, can result in any goal being achieved. CEW+ is inspired by Rachel's vision and dedication and is proud to name her a Christine Kahan Black Scholar.

Amina Peters Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar



Amina Peters believes that women are powerful agents of change and that supporting them on their journeys is vital as they strive for global impact.

After developing a love for science in high school, Amina pursued a bachelor's degree in chemistry and graduated in 2004. She then put her dream of starting graduate school on hold and spent the next 9 years solely at home raising her family. When her marriage ended in divorce, she became the primary caregiver for her four children and began working as a massage therapist to support her family.

When her youngest child started school, Amina once again considered pursuing her master's degree in an effort to advance her career. In the time she spent working as a massage therapist, she had developed an interest in movement, and knew kinesiology was the right field for her. Pairing her interest in kinesiology with her desire to learn more about how movement affects women's relationships within the family, Amina plans to earn her master's degree in social work.

Currently working a second job as a research assistant for the School of Nursing, Amina is committed to making a better life for her and her family. Her ultimate goals focus on helping women develop healthy habits for movement and stress management, and improving the bonds between mothers and their children. Amina says, "I am particularly interested in working with underprivileged women, as I have a close and intimate knowledge of many of the problems that are faced by vulnerable populations."

CEW+ applauds Amina's vision and names her a Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

Renee Pinter Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar



As the primary caregiver for her son Braeden, whom she had as a freshman in college, Renee Pinter finds herself striking a balance between supporting her growing son and pursuing her dreams. Recognizing that working full-time to support her family, providing care for her son, and earning her master's degree in business administration all require care and attention, Renee focuses on pacing herself, ensuring success in all she takes on. With so much on her plate, Renee is praised for her keen ability to see opportunity where others would see obstacles.

Upon graduation from the University of Michigan-Dearborn, Renee plans to pursue a career in product management, marketing, or small business operations. With the use of a technique called visioning, Renee is continually re-evaluating what success looks like to her at any given time. By breaking her goals down into steps, she creates manageable timelines and focuses on how she can most effectively work toward her objectives. A helper at her core, Renee also plans to use her MBA to help others realize their hopes and dreams through defining plans for success.

With many responsibilities in her day-to-day life, Renee is committed to doing her best to achieve her goals and begin making a bigger impact on her community. CEW+ is inspired by Renee's ability to remain focused on her goals as challenges arise and names her a Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

Kamaria Porter Jean W. Campbell Scholar



Upon completion of her bachelor's degree in history in 2006, Kamaria Porter knew she wanted to pursue a PhD, yet chose to delay that work to engage in social justice and community organizing. Born and raised in Chicago by a single mother, she devoted herself to helping to support her family in any way she could. Initially focused on curbing gun violence and expanding affordable housing access to poor individuals in Illinois, her desire to bring positive change to her hometown communities expanded that focus over time.

Since earning her bachelor's degree, Kamaria has worked to assist women of color to tell powerful stories of the challenges they face to elected officials; support school-age students living in economically disadvantaged communities; and support victims of sexual assault, especially on college campuses. Recognizing that universities can better support victims of sexual assault, and realizing that there was little to no research done on the topic in higher education, Kamaria decided that she could be the scholar to produce the research she wanted to see.

Kamaria earned her master's degree in higher education in 2014 and is currently pursuing her PhD in the same field. Her goal is to become a professor and "integrate [her] experiences in [her] teaching, research, and service," with a focus on mentoring students of color engaged in socially conscious research projects. In addition, she hopes to support community members, particularly formerly incarcerated women. Kamaria is said to be "in the early stages of a brilliant, high impact career devoted to identifying and ameliorating inequalities in higher education."

CEW+ values Kamaria's important work and names her a Jean W. Campbell Scholar.

Rowan Renee Elsie Choy Lee Scholar



Growing up and witnessing generational gender-based violence and abuse has shaped much of Rowan Renee's goals and aspirations. After obtaining their bachelors in fine arts in 2007, they thought they had finished their journey in higher education and set out to work as an artist in New York City. After ten years, Rowan says they realized "that my credentials were limiting my ability to rise to my full potential."

It was then that they began the MFA program at the University of Michigan. Through their education, Rowan was able to find a connection between the experiences of the women in their family with "large patterns of structural injustice at the intersections of gender, sexuality, race, and class." Recognized for being "extraordinarily comfortable in their eagerness to push beyond the easiest solutions," Rowan plans to use their MFA to improve the lives of those affected by gender-based violence.

By combining public engagement through exhibitions, workshops, and lectures, they hope to bring to light conversations and create broad public interest in the issues of gender-based violence in an effort to find solutions. Mixing art practice with education, Rowan hopes to provide alternatives to young individuals who grew up in challenging circumstances, just like them. Rowan envisions a platform to help individuals become the people they strive to be.

CEW+ commends Rowan's persistence and dedication and names them an Elsie Choy Lee Scholar.

Amanda Respass Mary Malcomson Raphael Fellowship



Amanda Respass is earning her PhD in the highly competitive anthropology and history doctoral program at the University of Michigan Rackham Graduate School, as well as completing a graduate certificate in museum studies. Her current path is informed both by a project she completed during her prestigious Boone Internship at the Department of Anthropology Field Museum and training and work experience in traditional Chinese medicine, complementary and alternative medicine, and women's health.

Recognized as a talented scholar, Amanda "always asks big and important questions and looks to multiple and often unexpected sources, material and literary, of information in order to illuminate them." Her current work focuses on the maritime circulation of medical knowledge and materials between the eleventh and fourteenth centuries, and how that exchange lives on in the present day. Amanda believes that by researching the histories of medicine, and global and cultural roots of diagnostics, she can bring this analysis into the classroom and provide a vantage point for medical students to think critically about medical education and their own ways of knowing. Amanda is contributing important work to scholarship on Islamic science and the ways in which knowledge about the pre-modern Asian and Islamic worlds gets taught to the public today.

Receiving many accolades on her journey, including a National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship, Rackham Humanities Graduate Research Fellowship, an Institute for the Humanities Fellowship, an Eisenberg Institute for Historical Studies Graduate Liaison Research Award, and a Museum Studies Graduate Practicum Award, Amanda is poised for success.

CEW+ is inspired by Amanda's work and names her a Mary Malcomson Raphael Fellowship recipient.

Cynthia Rice Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar



Cynthia Rice is a mother of three who kept her passion for earning a bachelor's degree alive while she spent the last 32 years as a stay at home mother and community servant. She says, "For me, education is not exclusively about the grade point average, but what I take away from the class and put into practical application." With two thriving adult sons experiencing lifelong challenges associated with autism disorder and having lived through many frightening health challenges herself, Cynthia approaches her academic pursuits with the same determination she found valuable in her personal life.

Serving on the PTA at her daughter's school, taking on leadership roles with Girl Scouts, and being a voice and advocate for those with autism inspired Cynthia to pursue a bachelor's degree in communication from the University of Michigan-Dearborn. In addition to her degree requirements, Cynthia is participating in The Talent Gateway, an online program at UM-Dearborn that combines networking and real-life interactions with potential employers at seminars that will help her prepare for a future career. She also recently joined Toastmasters International to refine her public speaking skills. Ultimately, Cynthia would like to develop a fruitful career serving autistic adults as they strive to reach their full potential and is planning to complete an internship placement with the Autism Alliance of Michigan. Seen as someone who "often goes out of her way to help other classmates," it is no surprise that Cynthia seeks a career in service of others.

CEW+ values Cynthia's determination and names her a Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

Stephanie Sablich Beatrice Kahn Scholar



Stephanie Sablich earned her bachelor's degree in education in 2010 and immediately moved to Romania to begin teaching. While there, she witnessed the effects of extreme poverty and discrimination. When she moved back to the United States and began teaching in the Chicago Public School System, she experienced many of the same challenges. Living in systems of poverty and oppression, her students regularly experienced trauma. Of her time spent teaching Stephanie says, "I felt as though I was essentially trying to do social work with skills in classroom management and curriculum formation and delivery." When one of her students was shot and killed by a police officer in 2013, Stephanie knew it was time to change her career path and applied to graduate school.

Challenges quickly arose in her life that delayed her plans to earn a master's degree in social work. Focused on overcoming the trauma of sexual assault, Stephanie spent the next few years focused on her health and stability. In 2017, she proudly began her graduate program at the University of Michigan with a new sense of strength and purpose.

Drawing from personal life experiences, Stephanie intends to work with individuals and communities who have experienced trauma. More specifically, her interests focus on "exploring the field of [trauma] prevention and early intervention among pregnant women and very young children." Citing research on the correlation between early relationship bonds and physical and mental health outcomes, Stephanie believes that her work will have long-term positive effects on the emotional health of her patients and their communities.

CEW+ anticipates great things from Stephanie's community service and engagement work and names her a Beatrice Kahn Scholar.

Mario Oliveira Sanca Elizabeth M. Dusseau Scholar



Mario Oliveira Sanca was born in Portugal and spent most of his childhood in Guinea-Bissau. Gleaning from his experiences as a child, early on he developed a passion for giving individuals in Guinea-Bissau more opportunities in life and providing them the tools to make more informed choices regarding their future and the future of their country.

Mario, committed to health care, completed nursing school at a time when Portugal was experiencing an economic crisis. In an effort to find work, he moved to Sweden where he spent a month learning the language before securing a position in an elite orthopedic surgery center. Though the work was steady and fruitful, Mario longed to work in a public health setting in Guinea-Bissau.

Applying at the University of Michigan was daunting to him, as he knew tuition would be costly. Earning his master's degree in environmental health sciences, Mario seeks to learn more about human health, disease prevention, early detection, and rapid action in response to emerging health problems. Specifically, Mario would like to study environmental effects on the health of small-town populations subsisting on cattle grazing in Guinea-Bissau. With a focus on how waste is managed, he seeks to advocate for environmental change. Mario says, "I believe that access to good healthcare is one of the most important human rights, and unfortunately access is lacking across the country."

In support of Mario's commitment to health outcomes for individuals in Guinea-Bissau, CEW+ names him an Elizabeth M. Dusseau Scholar.

Kristy Marie Sanfilippo Molly H. Dobson Scholar



Kristy Marie Sanfilippo was eager to begin her career as a dental hygienist after graduating with her associate's degree in 2012. Though she had dreams of pursuing a bachelor's degree, she felt held back by obligations to family and work, ultimately settling on the idea that she just was not well suited to pursue a four-year degree at a university. Discouraged by the challenges that lay in her path, Kristy realized over time, that her biggest obstacle was a lack of self-confidence.

With the encouragement of a co-worker who had returned to complete her degree later in life, she began to explore her options. After careful consideration, she applied and was accepted to the U-M Dental Hygiene Degree Completion E-Learning program. With the support of colleagues and her advisors, she began to carve out a path for successful degree completion. Faced with a demanding schedule as a wife, mother, and student with added financial strain, she is determined not only to succeed but also to excel with plans to continue with her education after graduation.

Recognized as someone who "takes an active approach to her learning, often seeking additional information from instructors to deepen her understanding of issues," Kristy is poised to succeed. Upon completion of her bachelor's degree, she aspires to earn a master's degree in either dental hygiene or public health. Ultimately, Kristy would like to influence aspiring dental professionals to pursue their dreams and improve access to quality dental care.

CEW+ values Kristy's persistence and commitment to dental hygiene and names her a Molly H. Dobson Scholar.

Tamiko Smith Gail Allen Scholar



Tamiko Smith is a first-generation college student pursuing her degree in history at the University of Michigan-Dearborn. Inspired by her grandmother's confidence in her intelligence and abilities, she completed high school after the birth of her son and went on to focus on building her career. Supporting her son as he graduated from high school, and then college, Tamiko longed to continue her education.

Two years after her grandmother passed away, Tamiko applied to UM-Dearborn and began a new and exciting journey. Honoring her grandmother's legacy, a determined Tamiko has committed herself to earn her degree. Known for her "rare ability to synthesize complex arguments and explore their implications," she plans to "pursue history as a means of empowering young people who are struggling with socioeconomic issues to show them their self-worth." Tamiko believes that in order for oppressed individuals to move forward, they must first understand their rich histories.

Upon graduation, Tamiko will pursue a secondary education certificate and plans to teach in Detroit with the goal of helping students "understand they are as much a part of history as the past, and explore the legacy they can leave on the world."

CEW+ values Tamiko's dedication to using history as a means to change the future for the better, and names her a Gail Allen Scholar.

Kelsey Soderstrom Helen Huff Shell Scholar



Kelsey Soderstrom has experienced many barriers to success, yet remains committed to achieving her goals. Complications from a premature birth prohibited her from taking regular classes with her peers in elementary school and placed her in a program designed to provide extra assistance with math. Working diligently to improve her skills, she reached and eventually exceeded her peers. By the time Kelsey reached high school, she took accelerated math courses, won the AP Calculus BC Student of the Year Award, and graduated as her class valedictorian. Her hard work and persistence had paid off.

After earning her bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering, genetic bone spurs caused significant health complications for Kelsey in 2012. After years of misdiagnosis, she underwent three surgeries, significantly improving her quality of life. Though each surgery required time to heal, and specialized physical therapy, Kelsey desired to earn her MBA and was determined to achieve her goal.

"Passionate about helping individuals, especially women and those who have little financial knowledge to better understand financial matters," Kelsey plans to use her MBA to strengthen financial literacy. In a time when individuals are increasingly responsible for managing their own retirement, she believes that placing greater emphasis on making well-informed financial decisions is vitally important. In addition to her plans, Kelsey also intends to run for her local school board, where she will advocate for financial education becoming part of basic curriculum requirements.

CEW+ appreciates Kelsey's commitment to improving financial literacy and names her a Helen Huff Shell Scholar.

Anne Steen Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar



In September of 2016, Anne Steen was set to begin law school at the University of Michigan. Discovering that she was pregnant was a wonderful surprise that delayed her educational pursuits a year, and altered the course of her life forever. Though the challenges of mothering a young child while in law school riddled her journey with long nights and chaotic days, she is committed to persisting and achieving her aspirations.

Anne has two very simple goals in life: to serve as a legal counselor and leader in her community and to be a good mother to her son. She says, "I plan to achieve that by working hard to earn my degree from Michigan Law and by staying focused on what brought me here in the first place: the desire to have more voice and agency." Completing law school as a mother will serve as a significant personal accomplishment for Anne, and she draws much of her inspiration from other women who have achieved so much while managing complex life situations.

Known for being "genuine, kind, and funny," Anne is also recognized as a "team player, and it is clear that her classmates like and respect her." With the goal of using her law degree to bolster meaningful change in her community, Anne will undoubtedly draw from these strengths in her work.

CEW+ commends Anne's dedication and names her a Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

Andrea Danette Eskridge Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar



Andrea Danette Eskridge is pursuing a master's degree in nursing midwifery with the vision of reducing pregnancy-related morbidity and mortality rates in the United States. When Andrea and her husband blended their families in 2013, she became the primary caregiver for their children. As her husband pursued his bachelor's degree, she focused on doing everything she could to advance her nursing career. Though she dreamed of becoming a certified nurse midwife, various roadblocks delayed her goal. Though other priorities took precedence, her desire to progress in her career never faded. Focused on growth, Andrea took a second job working at the University of Detroit Mercy teaching clinical courses when her youngest daughter began school.

Andrea says, "getting to graduate school was a long and winding road, as so many things made their way into my life," yet she manages her many responsibilities with unwavering dedication. Recognized for her ability to "juggle it all and have it appear easy," Andrea is persistent in her pursuit of her master's degree. With the ultimate goal of working with underserved and underrepresented populations, she hopes to provide critical care to patients, especially women, who lack access to reliable, collaborative healthcare services.

CEW+ applauds Andrea's persistence and her focus on providing quality healthcare to those who otherwise would not have access and names her a Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

Frances Trott Margaret E. Gnegy Scholar



Upon completion of her bachelor's degree in animal science and agricultural economics, Frances set out on an exciting and rewarding path. When her husband relocated to the Netherlands for work, she traveled with him, gaining knowledge on the cheese making business along the way. Traveling Europe, her interest grew and evolved over time. When Frances returned to the United States, she established a sheep dairy business, pairing many of the skills she had acquired during her time in Europe with previous work experience. The birth of her first son made running her business challenging, and she began to consider career options better suited to her lifestyle.

Pairing her love of science with her desire to help others, Frances took a part-time job as a pharmacy technician to explore the field. Over time, she developed a love for the work and realized her goal of becoming a pharmacist. Though the birth of her second son delayed her studies a year, she began pursuing her professional degree in PharmD in September 2017. Frances considers herself a lifelong learner, and though she plans to seize opportunities as they arise, she hopes that her career ultimately makes a difference in the lives of individuals with evolving medication needs.

Though her road was winding, Frances values the experiences that led her to where she is today and looks forward to a successful career that will provide for her family. CEW+ values Frances' unique perspective and experiences and names her a Margaret E. Gnegy Scholar.

Afifa Uzzaman Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar

As a mother, physician, wife, caretaker, and student, Afifa Uzzaman wears many hats. Focused on being successful in each of these important spaces in her life, she is concentrating on completing her master's degree in clinical research design, methodologies, and statistical analysis.

When her third child was born premature, Afifa took time off from work and her education to provide the care he required, working intermittently to help support her family during her husband's enrollment in a fellowship. When her youngest child was a year old, she too enrolled in a fellowship, focused on addressing sleep disorders in patients. Inspired by an earlier fellowship focused on movement disorders, Afifa recognized a strong connection between the two. It was during this time that she found her true calling in sleep medicine.

Recruited to develop the Ann Arbor VA Healthcare System's Sleep Center, she built the program from the ground up and is currently focusing on her research. Earning many accolades over the course of her schooling and medical career, Afifa is now focused on her research interests of improving quality of life for pregnant women with restless leg syndrome, and veterans experiencing parasomnias as part of post-traumatic stress disorder. Ultimately, Afifa says she hopes to "disseminate [her] work through national and international publications, affecting not only clinical but national policy change."

CEW+ values Afifa's commitment to expectant mothers and veterans and names her a Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

Mai Ze Vang Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar



As a Hmong woman, a first-generation college student, and a caretaker, Mai Ze Vang has experienced many challenges on her journey to achieve her academic goals. Born in a refugee camp, Mai Ze lived there until she was 6-years-old before moving to Michigan. Inspired by the hard work of her eldest brother to build a life for her and her siblings in the United States, she earned a bachelor's degree in Asian studies in 2012 and graduated with high honors. Upon graduation, Mai Ze earned a University of Michigan Fulbright scholarship and traveled to Thailand. During this time, she focused on serving the Hmong and other minorities by supporting them to use their voice to educate others, remember who they are, and act as a bridge between communities. During her time in Thailand, she realized how minorities often find themselves in challenging positions across the world as they work to contribute to society and thrive.

Mai Ze is now pursuing a dual master's degree in Southeast Asian studies and public policy and hopes to work for the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization in Bangkok as a policy analyst focusing on culture and education. Recognized as someone who is "generous, empathetic, diplomatic, and possesses great integrity," Mai Ze hopes to serve as a voice for the underrepresented.

Eventually, she intends to start her own organization focused on helping underrepresented groups in Thailand access higher education.

CEW+ is proud of all that Mai Ze has accomplished and celebrates her future plans naming her a Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

Justin Villanueva CEW+ Graduate Scholar



From a young age, Justin Villanueva struggled with school and accepted that academic success was not in his future. As a single parent, Justin's mother was focused on working to provide for her two sons and had little free time to dedicate to supporting him through his early education. After marrying his wife, he found that she supported his desires to earn a degree and enrolled in community college. While working full-time, Justin earned his associates degree in liberal arts with an impressive 4.0 GPA. Inspired by his success, Justin set his sights on earning a bachelor's degree and enrolled at the University of Michigan.

Confident in his abilities, Justin has not slowed his progress, earning his bachelor's degree and immediately setting his sights on earning a master's degree in higher education administration. Realizing that he wasn't a bad student as a child, but just lacked the support system he needed to succeed, Justin aims to use his degree to help other students like him realize their potential in higher education as well.

Lauded as "a professor's dream," Justin knows firsthand the unique challenges faced by nontraditional students, those who work full-time, and those from disenfranchised populations. Of his future goals, Justin says he intends to "help students that might not traditionally get an opportunity to contribute and benefit from higher education to get their chance at doing so."

CEW+ is thrilled to have an ally in Justin Villanueva and names him a CEW+ Graduate Scholar.

Carly Wayne Mary Malcomson Raphael Fellow



Carly Wayne was inspired to pursue her PhD in political science after studying and working for several years in Israel. Witnessing first-hand political violence and the harmful effects of modern-day warfare, she was motivated to research dilemmas policy-makers face when managing national security threats. In an ever-changing world, Carly wanted to learn more about the ways that conflict influences both the attitudes and decisions of political leaders, as well as the lives and well-being of the public.

Her goal is to become a university professor and conduct research that engages policy-makers while providing tools and resources for political leaders to navigate the many national security challenges they face. In addition, Carly is committed to promoting gender equality and intends to foster relationships to increase the number of female researchers in the field of international security through mentorship and advocacy.

In her time as a graduate student, Carly has served as co-chair of the Political Science Women's Caucus, and co-president of the Graduate Association of Political Scientists. Recognized for her "creativity, hard work, and extraordinary productivity," it is said that Carly "perhaps will turn out to be the best to go through our doctoral program in a decade or more." As a new mother, Carly is navigating the challenges of balancing family responsibilities while pursuing her educational goals. She is dedicated to learning new ways of maximizing her impact while remaining focused on balancing her work and personal life.

CEW+ is honored to name Carly Wayne a Mary Malcomson Raphael Fellow.

Alisha Williams Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar



As a first-generation college student, Alisha Williams' parents encouraged her to eagerly pursue her goals and earn a college degree. After completing her bachelor's of science in nursing, she intended to earn her master's degree and become a family nurse practitioner. A challenging pregnancy, followed by her mother's death after a 14-month battle with a brain tumor, altered the course of her life immeasurably. Though the effects of such emotionally and financially challenging experiences weighed heavy on Alisha and put her dreams on hold, she never lost focus.

Losing her mother much earlier in life than she had anticipated led Alisha to reevaluate her dreams and aspirations. With strong faith, she decided to use her roadblocks as motivation, rather than a means for standing still. Alisha had become a nurse with the intention of helping to improve the lives of others, and she is now pursuing her master's degree at the University of Michigan-Flint in order to have even more impact.

Alisha's ultimate vision for success is to make her mother proud. After witnessing her battle with glioblastoma multiforme, she hopes to make an impact in the lives of oncology patients as they navigate difficult health journeys. She would also like to provide thoughtful support to patients experiencing complications of lupus, as this disease is prevalent and has affected many of her loved ones. Alisha says, "it is a blessing being a nurse," and she cherishes "the opportunity to touch the hearts of so many."

CEW+ appreciates Alisha's commitment to providing well-rounded healthcare and names her a Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

Sasha Zhou Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar



Sasha Zhou aspires to make a lasting impact in the field of public health. Becoming a parent has opened her eyes to the many challenges faced by mothers while they pursue higher education. With support received through various community outlets, family, and friends, Sasha was able to gain resources and health services that proved vital on her path to success.

After completing her bachelor's degree in psychology, she sought a graduate degree in an effort to build her technical skills. Recognizing that there are disparities in access to support, treatment, and mental health care services among marginalized populations, Sasha has chosen to pursue a PhD in health management and policy at the University of Michigan School of Public Health. Her goal is to increase public discourse and awareness around health care delivery to vulnerable populations. Sasha also intends to focus on mental health needs in marginalized populations around the world.

Sasha doesn't consider herself a traditional academic given her background and family situation and plans to advocate for mothers and families in academia to create spaces for them to achieve their goals without having to choose between their professional and personal lives. Having "demonstrated considerable persistence in overcoming challenges and working towards her academic and career goals," Sasha will undoubtedly change lives for the better.

CEW+ is proud of the work with which Sasha Zhou is engaged and names her a Margaret Dow Towsley Scholar.

Thank you

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CEW+ empowers women and underserved individuals in the University of Michigan and surrounding communities by serving as an advocate and providing resources to help them reach their academic, financial, and professional potential.



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